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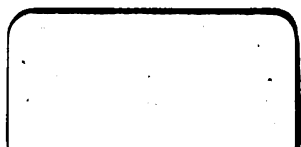
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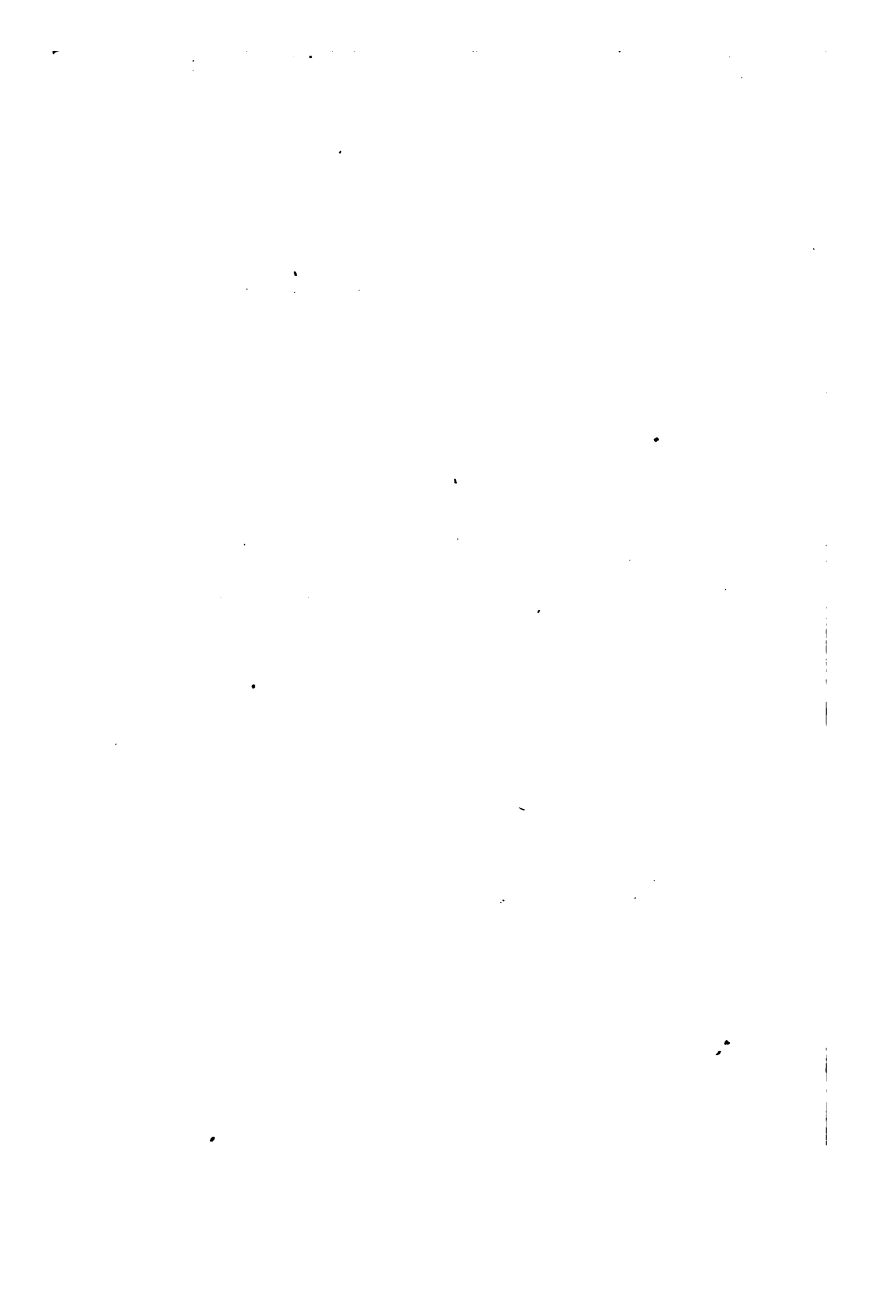
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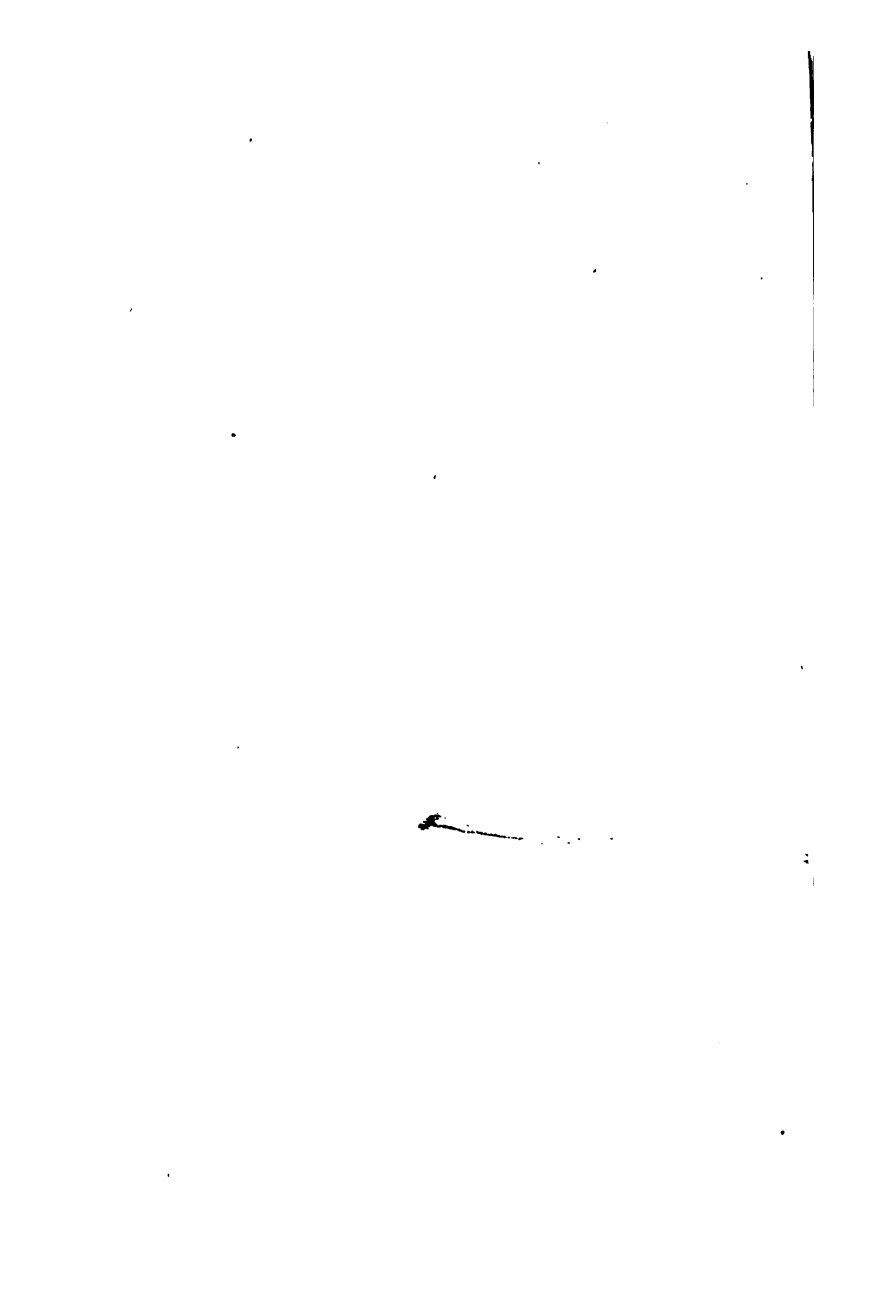
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THE
CRIPPLE OF
ROTTENSTEIN

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THE
CRIPPLE OF ROTTENSTEIN.

A Narrative of Facts.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF

G. H. VON SCHUBERT,

AUTHOR OF "A JOURNEY IN THE EAST," ETC. ETC.

BY MRS. W. H.



LONDON:
G. W. NICKISSON, 215 REGENT STREET.
(SUCCESSOR TO THE LATE JAMES FRASER).

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THE following little tale was committed to my care, some time ago, by a very dear friend ; with a request that if, on perusal, I thought it capable of effecting any good, I would publish it. I have read it through attentively, and entertain no doubt whatever upon the subject. The lesson taught is that of cheerful submission to God's will, of an unwavering faith in God's goodness, of an earnest hope in Christ Jesus, and of the peace which arises out of such faith, amid the deepest temporal afflictions. A book which inculcates such principles as these ought to be in the hands of every body. The present book does inculcate these principles ; and, therefore, it is offered to the public.

Of the author, Mr. von Schubert, less, I believe, is known in England than his

merits deserve. He is not only a man of genius, but a Christian in the best sense of the term, who cheerfully dedicates the talents which God has given him to his Maker's service. If this specimen of his manner of teaching the great truths of revelation by example have the effect of drawing him more into notice, even thus a good end will have been attained.

Concerning the Translator, I am permitted to say very little ; she is herself a foreigner ; yet, as the following pages will shew, she is no mean proficient in the English language. Her modesty has drawn over her name a veil which I do not feel myself justified in removing. But this much I will take upon myself to state—that if so much as one wounded spirit be brought by the perusal of the Cripple of Rottenstein to the foot of the Cross, the best wish of a benevolent and generous heart will be accomplished.

CHELSEA COLLEGE,
January, 1843.

THE
CRIPPLE OF ROTTENSTEIN.

SOME time ago there lived, in a small cottage at a little distance from the village of Rottenstein, in Bavaria, a poor cripple, who, from his birth to his sixty-second year, when it pleased the Lord to release him from the bonds of his miserable body, had never been able to exist without the assistance of others. Such was the deformity of his body that he was almost like a ball, his knees actually touching his chin. This wretched creature could neither stretch his legs nor make use of them to walk; the utmost he was able to do was to crawl, or, rather, to roll the distance of a few steps, when the surface of the ground was perfectly even; and in the last years of his life his poor body, broken and bruised, and entirely ex-

hausted by sufferings, was no longer capable of even this slight exercise. His arms were almost as deformed as his legs; yet, in the days of his youth, he had at least been able to move his hands and fingers, and had made such diligent use of them in knitting stockings, sewing, and doing other easy work, that he, at that time, earned the oatmeal-soup, and the bread, which composed his daily food, and had even succeeded in laying by something for the future. At a later period, during a winter, very severe for that country, he had become a martyr to the gout, and was thus deprived of the use of his hands, so that from his fiftieth year he was obliged to be fed like an infant.

His lodging was free, for the cabin he occupied belonged to the parish—it was a kind of hospital. In former times, when the plague used to desolate those countries, it was the place where persons whose case was considered hopeless were deposited. And this accounts for the cottage being out of the village, on the border of a large wood, and away from the high road.

During the life of the old shepherd's widow, who had been allowed a refuge in the same place, in consequence of her great age and infirmities, our poor cripple received from her the services most indispensable to his situation. In her last years, that old woman, who had been in her youth of a violent and quarrelsome temper, had exhibited a model of meekness, of patience, and of real piety to all her acquaintances, and had been like a mother to our impotent friend. She prepared his food, and gathered in the forest wood to warm them both in the winter. She had watched him with the tenderest solicitude, and always shared with him what sympathising friends gave her.

At the time when Jacob—such was the cripple's name—had lost the use of his hands, the shepherd's widow was already eighty-two, and there is every reason to believe that Jacob would not have been visited with this affliction if a severe illness had not kept his old friend in bed for several days, during which there was no one to heat the stove, and to paste a piece of paper on the broken window,

when the wind had torn away that which covered it. As soon as she was able to get up again and resume her occupations, she redoubled her care of her dear invalid, and did every thing in her power to render his situation more tolerable.

But poor Jacob only enjoyed these blessings four years ; for at the end of that time this kind attendant, who had been like a mother to him, was taken away in her eighty-sixth year.

Through God's mercy, she had no long illness, and died suddenly in the night. Like a fruit, grown and ripened in the midst of storms, which falls without wind or shock, she had not seen the approach of death ; it had come to her as a sweet sleep. The evening before, she had walked to the village, supported by her staff, and had visited the pious old widow of a farmer, from whom, for many years, she had been in the habit of receiving alms. She had thanked her benefactress for all the proofs of her love, and begged of her, in case she should not return for some days, to inquire for her and poor Jacob, " For,"

said she, " I have a presentiment of my approaching end." The following evening, the good widow, mindful of what Elsbeth had told her, sent a servant-maid to the cottage, who brought back the news that the old shepherdess was no more.

Poor Jacob, whose sleep was generally interrupted by the pains occasioned by his gout, had, however, not perceived the death of his fellow-lodger ; he thought merely she slept that day more soundly and more quietly than usual ; but when the sun shone on her bed, seeing that it did not awake her, he made an effort to raise himself up a little on his couch, and he beheld a deadly paleness on the countenance of his kind nurse. Her eyes were fixed and dull, and wide open, and there was no one to close them.

After the mortal remains of old Elsbeth were consigned to their parent earth, Jacob was left alone in the cabin, and he would have died of hunger and want of care, had not God inclined in his favour the hearts of some kind persons, who, after the termination of their

own painful labours, provided for him, and nursed him in his distress.

The young pastor of Rottenstein, who had only been a few months in the parish, had learned all these details from the people of the village. They told him that old Elsbeth had been very wicked and violent in her youth, and that when she obtained permission to live in the old hospital, as it was called, every one pitied poor Jacob, who was patience and meekness personified; but, to the astonishment of all, she had, by degrees, become quite another being. They also spoke to him of the poor cripple; and from that time he had often sent him food from his own table, and had gone to visit him several times during the winter, always coming back in astonishment at this afflicted old man. For neither his face nor his head shared the deformity of his body, and there was an expression of vivacity and sweet joy in his look and in his features, which the pastor had met with in very few individuals. He did not speak much; but his were good and laudable words, and it seemed as if one could

always read in his eyes and whole physiognomy many things which he did not say, perhaps because the young pastor had never time to converse long enough with him.

The month of February had been very damp, and the cabin of our poor invalid was crumbling to pieces on every side. The roof especially was in a sad state, and, though often mended by a faithful friend of Jacob's, it let the rain fall through on the dilapidated floor and on the very bed of the invalid. He, of course, was much the worse for all this; for the earthly envelope of his holy and purified spirit was even more worn and broken than the little cabin on the edge of the wood. One morning, when a messenger came to lay beside his bed the cruse of water and the oatmeal-soup which a kind peasant had prepared for him, he found him in a fainting fit. Assistance was called in. At first, they supposed him dead, and were going to remove him from his couch when he recovered; but he was still so weak that he could not utter a single word. The messenger quickly heated the stove, and put the bed in a more sheltered situation, and a

kind person having sent a blanket, they warmed it and put it on the invalid, giving him, at the same time, something strengthening to drink. Jacob's looks, soon assuming again their usual expression of serenity and happiness, rested, with gratitude, on those that surrounded him ; and the first words which he pronounced distinctly enough to be understood were, to beg some one to go to the pastor, and request him to come and administer the Sacrament to him in the course of the day.

The young pastor set out, immediately after his dinner, for poor Jacob's cabin. The clouds had been dispelled, and the drops of rain which hung from the branches of the pines were glittering in the sun. On entering the miserable room, he found, sitting near Jacob's bed, an old man, with white locks, and his eyes moistened with tears. He had sometimes seen the same old man in church, though he did not belong to the parish of Rottenstein.

The sun was shining into the room through the only window which let in the light. The pastor, who had seldom found himself at the

bedside of the poor and the dying, at first cast an uneasy glance about the room, but his eyes discovered nothing that could shock his feelings. Order and the greatest cleanliness were every where remarkable, and softened the painful impression which this exterior of great poverty might otherwise have occasioned: the invalid himself was covered with white and clean linen. Yet all this was not what most attracted the young minister's attention. He now, for the first time, observed the poor cripple with some attention, and he could not take his eyes off him.

But, some one will perhaps ask, What could there be attractive or pleasing in the sight of a poor, impotent man? Ah! there is something that can give beauty even to a pale face withered by disease and sufferings; it is the expression of the peace of God, and of an ardent and sincere love for Jesus Christ. It was a good thing, and in favour of our pastor—who was faithful, but without much experience—to recognise this beauty in a poor man, and to rejoice at it; for every thing in him, each word, each feature, testified of the

joy which the sight of poor Jacob gave him on that occasion, and the deep impression which it made on his heart.

Finding the invalid better than he had expected, he wished to have some conversation with him before administering to him the Holy Communion.

“ You seem, my dear friend,” said he, “ to know the danger of your situation, and to be prepared to die ? ”

“ I am ready to live or to die,” answered Jacob, with a look of inexpressible joy ; “ my life is in the hands of the Lord ; He can prolong it if it seems good unto Him, or take it away according to His pleasure.”

“ How is it possible, my dear Jacob,” asked the pastor, “ that all your desire is not to be delivered from your miserable body ? Can you really contemplate, without anguish, the prolongation of an existence which has been to you a mere series of pains and torments ? ”

“ Many years,” answered Jacob, “ have I looked forward with a longing heart, for the moment when my soul, delivered of this wretched envelope, shall depart to receive at

the hands of my Saviour a better and more glorious covering. And yet my life has not been so miserable, so full of woes as to make me think only with anguish of its prolongation; on the contrary, I acknowledge, with the most lively gratitude towards my Creator, that, with the exception of a few painful moments, my life has been full of joy and happiness."

"Poor man!" continued the pastor, "I cannot but commend you for not complaining or lamenting constantly, as others do; and that you seem to remember, above all, the good which the Lord has bestowed on you during your life. Your youth, or, at least, your childhood, has probably been peaceful and happy, and it is, no doubt, under the influence of that remembrance that you have just spoken; for, in after-life, you have experienced more misfortunes and more sufferings than any man I have ever known."

"That is just as one chooses to take it, sir," said the cripple. "My childhood and my youth have indeed been happy also; but at the time they did not always appear so to me. My father was a soldier, and I have never

known him ; for at the time of my birth he was in a regiment very far away, and soon after he perished in the Rhine. My mother, always delicate, died also soon after I was born. The grief of having lost her husband, and having given birth to a being so deformed as I was, brought her, they say, to the grave. My aged and pious grandmother had pity on me, and took me up into her garret. Though she often burst into tears at the sight of my miserable condition, yet she bestowed on me the same care and the same love as if I had been the handsomest child in the world. But my dear old grandmother herself had a great deal to suffer ; she lived with a daughter-in-law, who was very far from being kind to her, and no one in the house took the least interest in her ; for her son, the husband of her daughter-in-law, had died, and his widow had married again a stranger who was annoyed to see the old woman enjoying a room in his house, and some other little things with which, according to agreement, he was bound to provide her. Sometimes, when my grandmother took me to the warm sun before the cabin-

door, that man gave way to his anger, in words so harsh and full of bitterness against me, a poor cripple, who had never done him any harm, that my heart froze within me. My grandmother never answered him a word; but when we were alone, 'Jacob,' she would say, 'you must pray for Michel' (such was the man's name), 'and entreat God to bless both him and his house; for if you do that, every curse which he utters against you will be turned into a blessing ten times as powerful on you and on me.' My grandmother and I had often to suffer from misery and want, for my good grandmother, who formerly had enjoyed better fortunes, never complained to any one, but to God only, and God also relieved her wants day by day, till He had ripened her much-tried soul for heaven.

"While I was still a child without intelligence, I did not understand that my situation was happier than that of many other children of my own age; for I enjoyed with abundance that which is far preferable to fine clothes and delicate food. My grandmother was a peasant of a pure and simple faith, and she

was at the same time so full of fervour, that in turning her spinning-wheel, or occupying herself in some other way, she used continually to pray or sing beautiful hymns. She had taught me how to read, and I had devoted myself to that occupation with the more ardour that I had no other way of amusement. Every day I used to read to her out of her dear Bible; and I felt such pleasure in this, that if she had desired me I could have spent the whole day in doing it. But she had also taught me to work, for at that time I was still able to use my hands, and I employed them in doing all kind of easy work. Thus to the age of twelve, my soul, at least, was well fed and fortified. At that time the Lord saw fit to take to Himself my faithful benefactress. Feeling her end fast approaching, she had implored Him, with increased earnestness, henceforward to have the love of a tender mother for me, and to make up richly with heavenly benedictions for the temporal goods of which I was deprived. And God has heard her prayer, for after my grandmother had breathed her last, and when her body was taken out of

the room, and I, poor cripple, could not even accompany it to its last abode, in the midst of my grief and of my tears, I felt in my heart a consolation such as I had never before experienced. It seemed as if the Lord, to whose mercy my dying grandmother had recommended me, stood near me and said, 'I will not leave thee nor forsake thee; I will be thy help and thy consolation; I will care for thee as a tender mother careth for her child, and thou shalt want nothing.' And I can also say that my confidence and resignation never for a moment forsook me, however dreadful my situation might be. As long as I remained in my aunt's house, where no one shewed the least regard for me, the child of a neighbour, a little boy to whom I had often told the fine stories of the Bible and of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, came daily to share his bread with me. Thus, that time also passed on, till the parish had me removed to this place, where for fifty years I have found an asylum and every thing I needed."

"Poor Jacob!" resumed the pastor, "how often in this state of solitude and forsakenness

must your soul have been a prey to sorrow ! Fifty years of cruel sufferings, oh ! how very long that is !”

“ I have never felt my time hang heavy on me,” answered Jacob ; “ besides I have been seldom alone, and never forsaken. During the two first years, an old soldier, who had lost both his legs in the seven years’ war, lived with me in this hospital. He was a good man, often did he sing hymns with me, and his kindness relieved my inability to help myself. At that time I was often visited by a young clergyman, son of our pastor ; he was his father’s curate, but already he carried along with him the dangerous seeds of consumption, which was to remove him. This faithful servant of Christ had been desired by his father to prepare me for my first communion, and having perceived that I had read my Bible a great deal, and that through the grace of God I had imbibed its contents, it gave him great joy. After having administered the Sacrament to me on Good Friday, he said to me with tears in his eyes, ‘ Jacob, though we have been alone, here, in a miserable cabin,

and not in a temple, I have never yet felt, as to-day, all the solemnity of the holy act. And I have the assurance that we shall meet again together before the throne of God in a blessed state. May our heavenly Father only give me a faith as full of courage and of peace as yours.' On leaving me, this pious young man pressed my hand with as much affection as if it were not I that had just received from him proofs of love, but on the contrary I that had bestowed such proofs of love on him. He had probably the forefeeling that it was the last time he would be with me. Soon after Easter he took to his bed never to leave it again, and before the beginning of winter he gave up his soul in peace into the hands of his Saviour. When the old soldier told me that his reverence, the young curate, had died, and that he was to be buried the next day, I shed abundant tears for the loss of that faithful friend who had so often comforted me; but at the same time I felt in my heart a peace so sweet and so deep, that I seemed, by a lively hope, to have already the foretaste of the blessedness which awaited that faithful soul beyond

the grave. In general, since my first communion, my heart was for a long time filled with such unspeakable joy that sometimes I thought myself already in heaven. At that time I did not suffer from want, I felt no bodily pain, and by the labour of my hands I earned all that was necessary for me, so that I could even recompense my old companion for his services. After the death of the old soldier, his place was occupied by an aged and infirm woman, to whom the parish afterwards intrusted the care of some children, orphans, or abandoned by their parents. I was happy in the midst of these poor children, whom I was allowed to love, and the sight of whom gladdened my heart, though they were also a source of many uneasinesses; old Margaret often went away for many hours, she even sometimes remained out the whole day, leaving me in care of these little creatures. But when they cried and thus expressed their need of assistance, how could I, who could not help myself, afford them any help? It is more than twenty years since old Elsbeth, of whom your reverence has certainly heard, came to live near

me. First she shewed a restless and quarrelsome disposition, but latterly we have shared this abode in peace, and I have received many proofs of love at her hands, for which may the Lord recompense her throughout eternity! Since the death of Elsbeth until this day kind friends have often visited me, so that I have seldom been alone. Much less have I been abandoned, for it was peculiarly when there was no one about me, when all was as silent as the grave, that I most strongly felt the presence of the Lord, who, from my birth to my old age, has shewed me more love, more faithfulness than a mother could shew to her child."

"And yet, my dear Jacob," added the pastor, "the infirm state of your bruised and wounded body has often caused you great sufferings. I have heard myself many a sigh wrung from you by pain; how then have you been able, in the midst of these afflictions, to preserve that evenness of temper, that peace, that courage which you have always enjoyed, if I understand you well?"

"My dear sir," answered the poor cripple,

“already in my younger days, but much more so since I lost the use of my hands, I have fortified myself by the application of two remedies, which soften all pains, and make us forget all misfortunes. One of these remedies consists in humbling myself before God, the other in looking up to Him with confidence. When pain threatened to take hold of my body with too much violence, I recapitulated all the proofs of faithfulness and love with which my Creator has loaded me since the day of my birth. Is it not He who through this state of infirmity has preserved me from many faults into which those that are in health are apt to fall? Has He not come in all kinds of ways to relieve my destitute condition, providing me with food and raiment, and giving me a shelter against the cold and the storm? But what I especially called to mind in those moments was, that He had drawn me to His Son, that through His Spirit He had comforted me, and made me to taste unspeakable joys, and that through the earnest of that same Spirit He had already here below given me a foretaste of heavenly joy and felicity. When

I compared with all these blessings my own nothingness, my unworthiness,—when I considered myself, poor worm of the dust in the presence of the Lord of heaven and earth, who had condescended to come down to me to do me good, oh! then I felt myself so deeply humbled that I did not feel worthy even of those sufferings, which all taken together are not to be compared with the glory which is to be revealed in us. It was as if these pains passed over without touching me, as the waves pass over the head of the diver. Or at other times I elevated myself to Him who came down from Heaven to dwell in the midst of the miseries and corruptions of this world; I set before me His sufferings, and still more His resurrection and ascension, and each time it seemed as if, like a bird which soars away over a house falling in ruins, I rose above my sufferings, so that I felt them no more. In such moments my sighs were changed into thanksgiving, and my groanings into songs of praise; so that I can say, that, notwithstanding my infirmities, my life has been a happy and

a joyous one, and that I have received mercy after mercy at the hand of my God. Even the seasons, the summer and the autumn, have brought me yearly the tribute of their gifts; for as soon as cherries, apples, pears, or grapes, were ripe, pious friends remembered poor Jacob, and brought him in abundance of all these fruits."

This narrative of the poor man deeply moved the young minister, who had never yet found such faith in Israel. Without knowing it, poor Jacob had just been addressing to his pastor, bowed down and discouraged by some trifling annoyances which had befallen him that very day, a sermon of which he stood in the greatest need.

According to the Lutheran custom, Jacob confessed his sins as a man who feels in all its strength and power the presence of the living God. The pastor administered the sacrament to the invalid; Jacob's pale features, lighted up by the last rays of the setting sun, seemed illuminated by celestial power, and breathed nothing but joy and felicity. The young

minister, on leaving the cabin, carried away in his heart the feeling of a blessed peace which he had never till then experienced.

However, poor Jacob recovered once more, and continued for a few months longer his career of internal joy and bodily sufferings. During that time his pastor saw him more frequently, and each time he received more encouragement and consolation than he had brought to the invalid. At the end of the summer the latter became evidently weaker, and no doubts were now entertained that the hour of his departure was nigh at hand. The last time the pastor saw him he had lost the use of his speech, but his looks were the more eloquent, expressing love, humility, and gratitude. When the minister took leave of him, the invalid thanked him with a movement of the head, and then turned his eyes towards heaven. The young man felt as much as if one of his friends or relatives was about to leave him. The same evening he sent his servant, an honest and kind-hearted lad, to spend the night with poor Jacob. But this precaution was unnecessary, for the servant

found in the cabin two men, one of whom was reading the last chapters of St. John's Gospel. Yet the pastor did not regret having sent his servant, for he was so much touched with the death of the poor cripple that he never afterwards forgot it, and it was with many tears he related it to his master as follows:—

“ Before midnight, Jacob had fallen into a sweet sleep, and the two men said that for many months he had not rested so peaceably. During that sleep, which lasted several hours, an increasing paleness spread over his features, which took such a peculiar expression, that one of the men said, ‘ That his face was that of a saint.’ At last he awoke, looked about him like one who cannot speak for joy, and after a few moments he said with a loud and intelligible voice, ‘ Now the time is really come ; my eyes have seen already, my heart has already felt what I have believed and hoped for while on this earth.’ In saying this, he smiled joyfully and looked upwards, as if there had been an opening through which he could see into heaven. Then he turned to those who were near his bed, called the two men by

name, and exhorted them as well as him (the servant), to continue faithful to the Lord Jesus in words and deeds, even unto the end, and to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul; and then he gave them all his blessing. After that he begged his friends to read to him the 103d Psalm, and when he had come to those words, ‘And which crowneth thee with loving-kindnesses and tender mercies,’ he expired gently and like a saint.

“The morning-star had just risen, sparkling and glorious, and was shining through the window of the cabin, when one of those men closed the eyes of poor Jacob, saying, ‘He has finished his course like a Christian, he has really kept the faith unto the end; let us entreat the Lord to give us the same firm belief, and grace to be as faithful.’ We all knelt down to pray, and afterwards conversed together about holy things. When the day dawned, we washed the body, and having wrapped it in white linen we laid it on the bed.

“I cannot tell you, sir,” continued the servant, wiping his eyes, “what I feel to-day; it

is joy and sadness at the same time. Since we have come here, I had never gone to see poor Jacob, and yet he has left me a blessing for which I shall be eternally thankful to him."

It was during a bright and pleasant autumnal day that poor Jacob's remains were carried to their last abode. The birds were joyfully singing in the air and amongst the boughs of the trees. Two days previously, there had been buried a rich farmer of the village, whose funeral had been very numerously attended; but among all those that were present not one single tear had been shed, for they said, that though he had given employment to a great many of the poor of his native place, and had well fed his work-people, he had always behaved to those around him as if he could love no one.

"Poor Jacob!" said the pastor to himself, while he was preparing to go to the funeral; "who will accompany thee to thy last abode? who will give thee the tribute of a tear? Thou gavest no employment to any one, — thou gavest to drink or to eat to none; on the contrary, thou hast been a burthen on the parish

all thy life, the smallest among the small— thou hast in the village neither relative nor friend. And yet, even if no one should regret thee, thou poor impotent man, I will certainly bewail thee, for I know what thou hast been to me and what I owe thee ; and my poor servant, he will also follow thy coffin with affection.”

But what was the surprise of the young pastor when, on reaching the men who carried the coffin out of the cottage, he beheld the numerous procession that followed it ! He could count almost from every house in the village one or more persons who had come, and those who were not able to join the funeral saw it pass with uncovered heads, testifying their interest by a religious and solemn silence. But what increased still more the young pastor’s astonishment was the genuine and deep emotion which was remarkable in several persons of both sexes. Not only women and young girls, whose hearts are generally softer, but young men and aged men, were shedding tears, as if death had deprived them of a beloved father or of a great benefactor. How

extraordinary appeared this general grief, occasioned by the departure of a poor helpless cripple !

The pastor preached from these words : “ *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*” — (Rev. ii. 10.) Never before had he spoken with such warmth over a grave. Almost all the numerous auditors were in tears. After he had finished his exhortation, setting before his flock the hope of a glorious resurrection, the greater part of them returned to their respective homes. A few persons only remained in the churchyard, and they were just those who had attracted the especial attention of the pastor by the deep and unaffected grief which they manifested. Among them was the old man whom the minister had met in the cabin, and the two men who had closed the eyes of the invalid ; and there were several others whom the pastor did not know personally. The exterior of most of them indicated people belonging to the poorer class of society ; some of them came from the villages in the forest, and had a long way to return to their homes.

“As our poor Jacob,” said the pastor, approaching them, “has here no relations who can gratefully offer some humble refreshment to the friends who have rendered him the last duties, I will take it upon myself, and I invite you, my dear friends, to follow me to the manse, and to share with me what we shall find there.”

This kind invitation was thankfully accepted, and they all seated themselves round the minister’s table. “I have been greatly rejoiced, though, I must confess, much surprised,” said he to his guests, “at seeing, this day, so many weep over our poor and pious impotent the tears of real affliction, and yet we all rejoice that he has attained eternal rest, who, during his whole career has not been able to render a service or give a glass of water to any one.”

“The tears which flow from our eyes at the death of our friend,” said one of the men, “are tears of affection, and not of grief. Yes, we are all happy to think that his body, so weak, so torn by his numerous sufferings, enjoys now the quiet repose of the grave, and that his soul is in possession of that bliss which his Saviour

had prepared for him. But, my dear sir, you are greatly mistaken if you imagine that Jacob was not able, during his lifetime, to give a glass of water, or to render a service, or to do some good to any of his fellow-men, — I, even I, am a witness to the contrary. I was a poor child, left to die by a mother I had never known ; taken up by the parish and placed in the hospital, where, at that time, there was, besides Jacob, an old woman who was to take care of me. This woman never shewed herself careful about her duties towards me, and it was the poor cripple who performed them in her stead. All that he then earned in knitting stockings and sewing, he gave to old Margaret to buy milk and oatmeal for our food, linen and blankets to clothe and cover us. As Margaret used to sleep so soundly that she did not hear my screams during the night, he desired my cradle to be put beside him on his bed of straw, and I became thus to him a source of much trouble and uneasiness. When I grew up, he taught me to read, sent me to school, and, when I left it, he employed almost all that he had so

painfully earned by his work to make me learn the trade of a shoemaker. But what I value much more than all this is, that as soon as I could stammer a few words, he taught me to know and to love the Lord, and, thanks to his efforts, blessed of God, I have now a firm hope to be saved by Divine grace. I live in the forest, nine miles from this place, and I am poor, because I have eight children and a sickly wife to feed; but how often, God knows it, have I not desired to share with Jacob, my benefactor, my little economies, or, when my wife was well, to bring him some delicacies; but he would never receive any thing. ‘My dear Frederic,’ said he to me, ‘I am accustomed to my oatmeal gruel, and every other kind of food would hurt me. Keep this money for your children, who will want it some day or other, and carry those delicacies to poor Gertrude, who suffers from a lingering disease, and whose weak stomach cannot bear black bread.’ And he did the same, when I offered to remain with him, and attend him when he was sick either in the day or in the night. ‘Frederic,’ would he say, ‘I assure you, it is

more easy to me to help myself when I am alone; when I shall be in need of assistance, it will be sent to me.' The only service which he consented to receive at the hands of his friends was to keep his room and his person clean and tidy, and during this last illness he let us occasionally sit up with him."

"He has acted in the same way towards me," said a peasant woman, whose clothes announced more comfortable circumstances, and who lived likewise in one of the villages of the forest. "I would have given with as much pleasure as Frederic, if Jacob had accepted sometimes a little of what was superfluous to me, for there is no one in the world to whom I am so much indebted; but all my entreaties on this subject have been in vain. One day that I had brought him different things, and that he had refused them almost all, I began to weep bitterly, seeing that he would accept nothing in return for all his gifts to me. 'Comfort yourself, my good Catherine,' said he to me, 'and listen now to what I want to say. Let us suppose that from love for the pious countess of the castle, who you say is such a

kind lady, and whose goodness you have yourself experienced on more than one occasion—let us suppose, I say, that you were desirous of making her a present of fruit, or of some other produce of your garden, and that on your way you met a servant of the countess, who, in exchange for your pears, offered you a cap, such as are worn in the town; or that a stranger came and asked them from you in exchange for his stick, what would you say? You would reply:—‘I do not want to sell my pears, for I have gathered them for my lady the countess; and besides, I would not know what to do with your cap or your beautiful stick.’ Thus, Catherine, the little good I have been enabled to do to my neighbour, I have done only from love to the Lord, and I, a poor cripple, who can do nothing in comparison of the innumerable blessings and comforts which my beloved Saviour vouchsafes to my soul every day, would not like to receive my reward here below in earthly goods, the greater part of which I could make as little use of, and would care as little about, as you in your village would of a lady’s cap or of a Spanish cane. For, I

could not, without suffering from it, drink your bottle of wine, nor wear the fine and warm silk cap which your husband has brought me from the Tyrol ; I don't want your money neither, for poor people do not come to me to beg, and I cannot go and seek them out ; your golden crown, therefore, would serve me for no other purpose than to look at.'

“ All I could induce good old Jacob to receive was a few cherries, pears, apples, or other fruit, according to the season. Every year, on Holy Thursday, I used to bring to him some honey and a roll, and, from time to time, linen, spun, woven, and prepared by my own hands. He never would exchange his straw mattress for a good bed, because he said he was not accustomed to a soft bed.

“ And yet it is to that poor Jacob that I owe my life, my happiness in this world, and, with God's grace, that which awaits me beyond it. I was four years old when I arrived here with my mother, who was a native of the Grand Duchy of Baden. We had a long journey to perform, and we had undertaken it without any resources except what public charity af-

forded on the way. We were going to Dantzic; my father, who cared very little for his wife, had gone thither with a Russian nobleman, and finally remained there as a porter. It was winter, the cold was intense; my poor mother could not bear it; she fell ill in this village and died. As for me, it was determined that I should be sent back to my own country; but as I also had suffered much from the cold, so that my body was swelled and covered with wounds, I was placed in the hospital, where I was to stay till the spring. On arriving there I cried bitterly, because of the loss of my mother and of the pains which I felt; and old Elsbeth, the shepherd's widow, who at that time was neither so gentle nor so patient as she became afterwards, through the means of Jacob, as we all know, scolded, instead of trying to comfort me. Jacob, on the contrary, was very kind, and spoke to me as a child would to another child. In general, he appeared to me, during his whole life, to have continued like those little children, of whom it is said, — 'Of such is the kingdom of Heaven.' Jacob soon won all my confidence. With his

fingers, of which he had then still the use, he made me little dolls, with coloured rags; which Elsbeth had fetched from a field where they had served to frighten away the birds. He also made me a present of a little bell, with which he had played himself, in his infancy, at his grandmother's. There was a small wooden bench near his bed, on which, eight years previously, Frederic, then still a child, used to play. There seated almost the whole day, I used to amuse myself listening to the nice stories which Jacob told me out of the Bible. Though I was, in general, quiet and happy in my own way, yet those parts of my poor little body which had suffered from cold gave me occasionally acute pain, and my hands became so full of wounds, that often I could not refrain from tears and screams. After a while, Jacob, seeing this, said to old Elsbeth: 'I see perfectly that the village apothecary does not understand how to treat that poor child; besides that he has come only once to see her. Therefore, go into town, and tell the doctor to come; I will, with pleasure, pay both for his visits and prescriptions. Pro-

cure also some warm clothes for the poor little thing, and get what is necessary to give her every day, a good large cup of warm bread and milk, for she is as pale and thin as a skeleton.' At hearing this, old Elsbeth began to abuse poor Jacob for his generosity, and to tell him not to be so mad as to spend on a stranger's child the little money he had earned with so much trouble in knitting, from morning to night, and often even by moonlight. 'If ever you become ill,' said she to him, among other things, 'or when you are old, you will have nothing left you to procure some little comfort for yourself. And when I am dead, you will find no one to go and gather wood for the winter in the forest, out of charity; and if you have no money then, you will be left to shiver as much as you like, and to eat your oatmeal gruel raw.' But Jacob was immovable, and, after many gentle arguments and entreaties, he prevailed on Elsbeth to go to the mayor, in whose hand Jacob had deposited his little savings, to secure them against the thieves who infested the neighbourhood, to ask him for a few florins. From thence Elsbeth went into the

town for the doctor, and came back with some warm stuff for clothes, which Jacob cut out himself and sewed as well as he could. The medical man arrived; it was the late Dr. Schmidt, a very old man, and a real disciple of Christ. After conversing with Jacob, he felt a deep interest in him, and would never take any thing either for his visits or the medicines which he gave me. He ordered me a plentiful and strengthening diet until I should recover my health, directions which were faithfully complied with.

“ On the return of spring I was perfectly well again, and there was some talk of sending me back immediately to my country. But Jacob, having sent me with Elsbeth to the mayor, persuaded him to leave me at Rottenstein, till I could engage as a servant in the family of some peasant; adding, that he, poor cripple, would undertake, with the assistance of God, to provide for my trifling expenses by his work, and would appropriate to the same purpose the little savings which he had placed in his worship's hands. The magistrate did not at first appear disposed to comply with poor Jacob's

wishes ; but at last he yielded to the entreaties of his mother-in-law, a very pious woman. Accordingly I remained here, and had the happiness of spending many years in the hospital with Jacob, whom I loved as a father. Elsbeth herself became more and more kind to me ; it was easy to see that she felt the influence of pious Jacob's society, of his patience, his prayers, and his love, which it is impossible for any one to have an idea of who has not witnessed them, as I have done, insomuch that I can say of her that, from being violent and passionate, she became every day visibly more patient, meeker, and more pious. But, indeed, one must have been harder than stone to remain insensible to the words and to the life of Jacob. He prayed aloud with us every morning and evening, and often in the day ; and, though very young, I felt that his prayers were applicable to the wants of our hearts, and that in making them he seemed to read into our very souls. He would also sing beautiful hymns for us, and never did I hear a finer voice than that of our poor cripple. He generally read the Bible while he was knitting, and

when I had learned to read the task not unfrequently devolved upon me. When he was sewing, or doing some other work which required all his attention, it was easy to see, from his countenance, that his heart and thoughts were with God. I never heard him utter a word that was not such as became a real Christian.

“ When I review within myself the years of my childhood, years spent under the eyes of Jacob, that cabin is as a temple to me, where I was happy, because every thing in it breathed peace, and disposed the heart to holy contemplations. There I continually thought I saw in my dreams, and often even in my waking hours, beautiful little angels playing with me. For at that time I lived, if I may so say, in the divine stories of the Bible, which Jacob told me, or which we read together.

“ At the age of nine I entered into the miller’s family, to take care of his little children, where I was perfectly well treated, thanks to the Christian education which Jacob had given me, and without which I could not have acted so as to win the affection which was afterwards

shewed me in that house. The son of my mistress's sister came to spend some years in our mill, after the death of his mother, and to him I was afterwards married. Having previously consulted his aunt on the subject, she answered him: 'Catherine is no doubt a poor girl, but you could not find a better and more pious wife; and as she has now been many years serving me faithfully, and you are my nephew, I will undertake to give her her portion.' Thus it pleased the Lord to give me a worthy husband, who is a coach-driver, and with whom I have lived in perfect peace for more than twelve years. You see by this, sir, that what the poor cripple has done for Frederic and myself far surpasses a glass of water; and here is another who has no less reason than ourselves to be thankful to poor Jacob."

In saying this, the young woman pointed to a middle-aged man, already known to the pastor and his servant. He was the schoolmaster of a little village of the parish of Rottenstein, and was also one of the two men with whom the servant had passed the last night of Jacob's

life, and he had manifested during the burial the deepest and sincerest affliction.

A deep blush spread over the man's face as the peasant thus turned the attention of the company to him. "Sir," said he to the young minister, "you are my spiritual guide, why, then, should I hesitate to confess to you a very serious fault, which, after all, is known to most of the villagers, and which, both God and man, I feel assured, have long since forgiven me? I lost my parents at an early age; and though, by the aid of a good memory, I outstripped the rest of my class-fellows, both at school and in the religious instruction which we received from the late pastor, yet my moral education was greatly neglected at home. At the age of thirteen, I was placed as an apprentice to a belt-maker in the town, through the recommendation of our good pastor. But in this situation I made a very bad use of the faculties which the Lord had given me. I became acquainted with careless and wicked people; and as I had been formerly foremost at school, so now I became foremost in all the evil ways

of those with whom I lived. I went so far as to become the associate of a set of worthless fellows who, under my guidance, committed many thefts. One night, when we were engaged in stealing fruit in the rector's orchard, I climbed a very high tree, but, as it had rained that day, my foot slipped on the wet bark and I fell down, and in my fall broke my left arm, and received such a severe contusion on the head that I remained senseless on the spot. The terror of my companions on seeing that I gave no sign of life was beyond description; but, that our wicked design might not be detected, they carried me out of the garden, and left me at the foot of the wall belonging to the rampart of the castle, from the top of which several persons had from time to time fallen, in consequence of missing, in the dark, a very narrow and difficult path which leads from the rampart to the outer town. There I was found the next morning, bathed in blood. and as my master, a hard man, who, besides, had good reasons not to be satisfied with my conduct, refused to take the least interest in my misfortune, I was sent back to my parish,

where I had no relations, and where, consequently, I had nothing to expect but a place in the hospital. I was there for several days between life and death, so severe was the wound on my head. A surgeon from the town undertook my cure, and our kind pastor took upon himself all the expense, but, as soon as I had recovered my self-possession, began for me the cure of an evil much more serious than that of my body, and this real cure it was not the doctor, but kind Jacob, who undertook. He was not long without perceiving the melancholy state of my soul; his entreaties became so animated, so full of love, and supported by reasons so serious, that at last the hardness of my heart was broken, and through God's grace I entered into the narrow path. The trials through which it pleased the Lord to lead me contributed also powerfully to my conversion, and, above all, the inexpressible pains which I endured in the arm; for it had been necessary to extract fragments of the bone, which had been fractured in my fall. There was also something very humiliating to me in the thought that I should not only be obliged to

renounce my trade, but that I would scarcely be able to learn a new one, and that I should be maimed for the rest of my life, the doctor having declared that I would never be able to make use of my arm again. It was poor Jacob, again, who relieved me out of this painful position, by the means of this old friend whom you see here. He knew, intimately, a schoolmaster in town, of very delicate health, who was just at that time looking out for a young man to assist him in his school. Encouraged by Jacob, and under his direction, I had endeavoured, during my stay in the hospital, to learn something, and I was obliged to apply much more afterwards, when I became assistant to the above-mentioned schoolmaster, and was called to teach the children reading, writing, and ciphering. Thus, by the help of God, I have become a teacher, because kind old Jacob, whom may God bless throughout eternity for what he has done for my poor soul, had told me to go, and led me himself, to another Teacher, in whose school we poor sinners are prepared for eternity.”

The old friend whom the schoolmaster had

just mentioned in his short story was the same aged man whom the pastor had found with Jacob when he gave him the sacrament. He consequently addressed him as an old acquaintance, saying to him, "And you, how did you become intimate with Jacob?"

"Sir," answered the old man, "if these three persons have in their childhood and youth given much trouble to Jacob, I have caused him much more when I was no longer a child (unless my understanding rendered me one), and when my hair had already begun to whiten. I am a younger brother of that old Elsbeth, who, also, in her time, was a trial to poor Jacob's patience. When yet an apprentice, I had contracted the fatal habit of drinking spirits, and, when returned to my native place, I spent every farthing I earned in my trade of cart-wright on drink. In this manner I had soon thrown away all I possessed, so that I was obliged again to enter as a journeyman into the employment of another. In this situation if I worked tolerably during the week, as soon as I drew my wages on the Saturday, and felt money in my pockets, I recurred to my

bad propensities. I generally got entirely drunk; and as the people in whose house I lived would not let me in in that state, and also I was ashamed to shew myself to them in that condition, I always used to go to the hospital, where poor Jacob and my sister lived, to sleep off my drunkenness. As soon as I was myself again, Jacob never failed to admonish me with Christian love, while my sister, on her side, violently abused me; but neither his admonitions, nor her invectives, were of any use. Yet when, by means of Jacob, my sister by degrees became gentle and kind, and spoke to me in the same way as he did, it made more impression on my heart; and, after some time, I became so uneasy in their society that, rather than go to the hospital, I preferred spending the night in the open air, or under a hay-stack. One day, after drinking to excess, I was seized with a violent bleeding, and was carried to the hospital more dead than alive. Thanks to my sister's kind care, I soon came to myself. I felt extremely weak and ill, and the hour was come when the Lord opened my heart to receive with joy the good words of Jacob and of my

sister. From that time I returned, like the prodigal, to my Heavenly Father. He received me in grace, He has strengthened me, and kept me from falling; and since my marriage with a worthy widow my temporal circumstances have been improving. And I assure you, sir," said the old man, in terminating his narrative, "that all these that are now sitting at your table, regretting kind-hearted Jacob, have reasons, as well as myself and the schoolmaster, to thank God for the mercies which they have received from Him by the means of this poor cripple."

"And," added the young pastor, with tears in his eyes, "I shall not be last in adoring that grace of God. Poor Jacob has been to me also a preacher of the righteousness of God; and, with the help of the Lord, I shall now become myself more and more a preacher of that same righteousness."

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